

Operations Committee

August 26th, 2024

Present: Heather Gleason, Sara Carrigan, Mary Shumski, LeRoy Kiecker, Margy Hendrickson, and Sarah Longtin

I. EO Assessment Results

Heather Gleason shared that the EO assessments have been completed at each location and provided physical copies of the results. Electronic copies will also be sent out to the managers. Locations are instructed to work with landlords to address any concerns.

II. Staff Updates

Sarah Longtin: The Women in Non-Traditional Careers information was updated and formatted into a single sheet. Items will be sent out for staff to review and provide feedback. Somali Labor Market Infographics were adopted from a regional partner. These flyers will have statewide data, unlike the southwest/south central wage data on the English and Spanish versions. Tour of Manufacturing will take place on October 3 and 5. Staff and clients are encouraged to participate if interested. Tour sites can be found on the South Central Tour of Manufacturing website.

Sara Carrigan: Monitoring has taken place at Fairmont and Watonwan County and is going well; Mankato is on the schedule for September 9th. The Partners Training Day will be held October 29 covering topics such as mental health, trauma, and nutrition. Recruitment for the Partners In Career Exploration (PICE) program will be later this week with interviews planned for mid-September. Our Workforce Development Area (WDA) is part of the Office of Disability Employment Policy Equitable Transition Model Demonstration (ETM) Grant. More information will be provided when it becomes available. The South Central Construction Trades Boot Camp initiative was honored as the 2024 Promising Practice by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards, earning first place.

LeRoy Kiecker: The addition of Sarah McDonald has relieved stress off other staff. Caseloads and tasks are leveling out and creating a less tense atmosphere. LeRoy is considering sending staff to the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI) for federally funded training due to the reduction in Veteran Services funding. With the NVTI training, staff would be equipped with tools to better assist veterans. Employer Engagement sessions have been suspended due to lack of interest and an incoming Employment Engagement Supervisor. DEED will hire six Employment Engagement staff, one being placed in Mankato, which will adjust services and outreach. LeRoy recently connected with Dublin Crossing to provide outreach to residents on resumes and to support them in their employment goals. LeRoy expressed that there was a potential data breach in the Mankato CareerForce location on the resource computers. A ticket was submitted to MN IT in July, and it has not been addressed.

Upcoming events include the Resource Fair at South Central College on September 10 and the Job Fair at the Mankato Armory on October 22.

Mary Shumski: Updates were provided for both Itron and Nortech layoffs. Mary and other staff have been going to Itron weekly for the last 4 weeks and plans to be on site through September. There are 16 completed enrollments and participants are starting to work on resumes at the library. There are an additional 12 partial applications and 9 that have completed the assessment. Itron has extended time of some employees but laid off all temporary employees. Mary and other staff have a drop box onsite for any additional communication. There have been relationships established at Nortech and many basic skills assessments (TABE) have been completed. Jill is assisting and sharing best MFIP practices in Winona until their staff is replaced.

Margy Hendrickson: Community Service staff are attending an all-day training. WIOA Youth Out of School participation is full. Staff will be referring participants to WIOA Adult if it is appropriate. South Central College and Minnesota State University, Mankato are in session as of today, program participants have started their education. Energy Assistance Program (EAP) and HeadStart are now back in session as well. Staff attended backpack fairs at local schools in preparation for the academic year. The 2024 Waseca and Martin County Summer Internship programs have been completed. Margy asked about the Mankato lease. It was confirmed that the lease for Mankato has closed it's first year, June 30, 2024.

Heather Gleason: The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) meeting will be held on Thursday; additional information should be sent to Heather by Wednesday. Please contact Heather for Workforce One assistance including login information and corrections. If Heather is unavailable, please reach Bridgette Cooke for login information.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be September 23, 2024.

The meeting adjourned.